



THE NATURE OF VOLUNTEERING

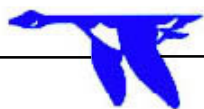
Vol 1. No. 28

EXPLORE THE WONDERS OF NATURE - VOLUNTEER

Summer 2006

DID YOU KNOW ...

- New Jersey is a peninsula.
- New Jersey has the most stringent testing along our coastline for water quality control than any other seaboard state in the entire country.
- Highlands, New Jersey has the highest elevation along the entire eastern seaboard, from Maine to Florida.
- New Jersey is the only state where all of its counties are classified as metropolitan areas.
- New Jersey has the densest system of highways and railroads in the US.
- North Jersey has the most shopping malls in one area in the world, with seven major shopping malls in a 25 square mile radius.
- New Jersey is home to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.
- New Jersey has 50+ resort cities & towns; some of the nation's most famous: Asbury Park, Wildwood, Atlantic City, Seaside Heights, Long Branch, Cape May.



**AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGES ...**

Wild Things

*where wildlife
comes naturally!*



KRIS ARCURI NAMED VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Kris's passion for the environment and getting people to appreciate it, was the main reason Kris decided to volunteer at Forsythe in 2000, and she's been here ever since. A retired school teacher (33 years teaching science to 3rd and 4th graders), Kris continues to volunteer at schools doing science projects which she shares with us (two of her projects brighten the walls in the Refuge auditorium). Kris is also on the Friends of Forsythe Board of Directors and on our newly formed environmental education committee. She works in the Friends Nature Store, helps with the weekly waterbird surveys and leads trips for school groups. She and her husband Alan, have lived in Absecon for 34 years.



Kris loves science, birds and working with children, and we love her volunteering with us.

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On the Lookout for Pathogenic Bird Flu

Experts within the Fish and Wildlife Service, US Geological Survey and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, along with USDA and Native Alaskan organizations, are working together to detect when or if the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 virus, also known as "bird flu," appears in North America. There are many subtypes of avian influenza. The specific one of concern - highly pathogenic H5N1 that has been found in more than 30 countries - is the focus of North American migratory bird surveillance. It is very likely that low pathogenic viruses, including those of the H5N1 subtype, will be found during this surveillance. These low pathogenic types are not significant for migratory birds and humans, and are only distantly related to the specific HPAI H5N1 of concern.

The role wild migrating birds might play in the movement and distribution of the virus to North America is unknown. Some believe that migratory birds from Asia, breeding in Alaska or mixing with North American birds in Siberian breeding grounds, could move the virus to North America, with its first appearance likely in Alaska.

Sampling of about 27 species of migratory birds is being conducted at more than 50 sites across Alaska, including Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. Migratory birds are also being sampled by staff assigned to the M/V Tiglax research vessel, which operates out of Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. Since 1998, more than 12,000 wild bird samples from Alaska have been examined for HPAI H5N1, including 1,100 sampled since Summer 2005. HPAI H5N1 has not been found in any sample.

Species of birds have been prioritized for surveillance based on several criteria linked to potential risk of HPAI: size of the population that winters in or migrates through Alaska; proximity to known sources of HPAI H5N1 in Asia; and the ability to obtain a sufficient sample number for sensitive detection.

"This is not a hit or miss effort," said Karen Sullivan, with the Service's Alaska External Affairs Office. "The surveillance plan was designed in such a way that if the HPAI H5N1 virus is present in Alaska, and we are able to obtain all the samples we plan for, we will have approximately a 95 percent chance of finding HPAI H5N1 if it is present in even as little as 1.5 percent of the sample population.

"The migratory bird species at the top of the list for

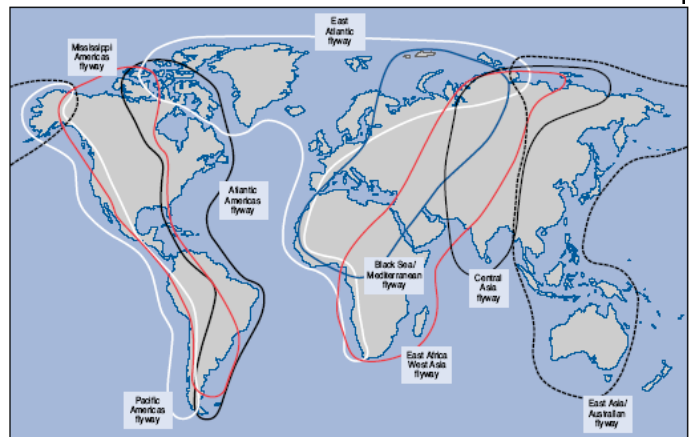
surveillance include Steller's eider, Pacific golden plover, northern pintail, bar-tailed godwit, Emperor goose, Dunlin, and black brant.

Interagency Plan for Early Detection

Many federal, state and local agencies as well as non-government entities in Alaska are working on this complex issue. Roles and responsibilities fall into several broad but interconnected areas primarily: wild birds, domestic poultry, and public health. The Alaska surveillance program, developed by the Service, USGS and the Alaska Department of Game and Fish, is based on national surveillance strategy:

- Investigate disease outbreaks in wild birds - If HPAI H5N1 virus is detected in wild birds, federal official will monitor domestic poultry and swine operations, and minimize contact between wild birds and domestic animals.
- Expanded monitoring of live wild birds - This year, 75,000 to 100,000 samples from live and dead wild birds will be collected all over the United States, including some on refuges associated with banding operations and research projects.
- Monitoring of hunter-killed birds - The Refuge System will work with state natural resource agencies to operate hunter check stations. In addition to working with USGS and USDA, the Service is also working with the four Migratory Bird Flyway Councils to enhance sampling plans for birds taken by hunters. In Alaska, hunter-killed birds will be sampled during subsistence harvest this spring and during the general hunting season in the fall.

Species of birds have been prioritized for surveillance based on several criteria linked to potential risk of HPAI: size of the population that winters in or migrates through Alaska; proximity to known sources of HPAI H5N1 in Asia; and the ability to obtain a sufficient sample number for sensitive detection.



by Cindy Heffley, Visitor Services Manager

"Purple Martin One to Purple Martin Two. We have an unauthorized flyer entering our airspace. Do you copy?" "Purple Martin Two to Purple Martin One. That's affirmative. Going into defensive mode. Okay squad, prepare for the attack." Suddenly the troops are surrounding the unauthorized flyer which happens to be a crow. As the crow, which just happened to be flying by, passes the colony, the Purple Martins begin to fly into it with a vengeance. Within seconds the crow is out of the airspace above the colony, and the Purple Martins resume their feeding ritual. This is a scene I see almost daily as I look out at the colony in the field in front of the headquarters building. I almost feel sorry for the crow that just appears to be passing through. I guess it hasn't checked the map for the restricted airspace above the colony.

Although the Purple Martins are quite adept at keeping their airspace free from predators, sometimes they aren't quite successful. Occasionally a Cooper's Hawk will swoop down and take an adult or young fledgling for a quick snack. Still other birds, like the House Sparrow, not only gain entrance to the airspace but also move right into the colony. Fortunately for the Purple Martins, the landlords are there to evict these unwelcome birds who not only take up residence in the Purple Martin's compartments but also peck holes in their eggs. And fortunately for the landlords, the Purple Martins don't consider them unauthorized visitors. While many other birds will bombard humans who come near their nests or young, Purple Martins have come to depend on us to take care of their colony so they don't harass us.

Part of taking care of the colony involves setting up the houses and gourds in late April. It seems like within days of setting them up, the sweet sound of the Purple Martin starts to fill the air as many return from their long migration from South America. Once the birds arrive and start to select their compartment, we begin our weekly nest checks. Al Martens and Jim and Joy Steet are assisting me again this season with the weekly duties. The first thing we check for is nesting material with green leaves. Usually the eggs are laid after the green leaves are placed in the nest, but this year we have had some parents placing green leaves over the eggs to cover them. Once the green leaves are in the nest, the mother lays between one and seven eggs. Since we increased the size of the compartments in the metal houses, the birds have more room for larger nests. This also provides a safer environment for most of the

young when they hatch out. So far we have approximately 100 eggs. Some eggs have been tossed to the ground either by the House Sparrows or by the parents themselves. You could say, "Don't count your chickens until they've hatched" comes into play with Purple Martins, too. Once the eggs hatch, we take the young out and measure them on a laminated sheet with actual pictures of each stage of growth. We also remove any dead birds that may be in the nest. This happens sometimes if there is a large brood and one doesn't get fed enough. Sometimes the parent or parents have been killed, so the young die of starvation. Purple Martin mentor Allen Jackson comes and bands the young with a federal band and state band when they are between 10 and 15 days old. The nestlings usually fledge at age 26 - 30 days. The quite intensive project comes to an end in early August when the air is suddenly silent and no birds are seen. Once all of the birds leave the colony, we clean out the houses and gourds and submit our data to the Purple Martin Conservation Association.

This season we're inviting the public of all ages (that includes you!) to come out on Thursday mornings at 9:00 to help with the nest checks. This could entail helping record data or measuring the young. If you'd rather not participate in the actual nest check, you could simply watch the birds as they land with a large dragonfly in their beak patiently waiting for us to raise the house back up. Or you might be treated to their aerial skirmish with an unsuspecting crow flying through their airspace. Either way, I think you'll enjoy getting to know these long-distance flyers as much as I do while they spend their nesting season at the refuge.



A WORD FROM OUR FRIENDS

The Friends of Forsythe NWR is a non-profit group established in 1998 to provide support and services to the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge in Oceanville, New Jersey. Our goals are:



- Promoting a better understanding of the natural history and environment of Southern New Jersey, the Edwin B. Forsythe NWR and the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- Helping to preserve and enhance the wildlife habitat at this Refuge, and to assist the Refuge, the Refuge System and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in a variety of educational and supportive efforts.

Please consider joining the Friends of Forsythe and help us accomplish these goals. Call 609-748-1535 or visit www.friendsofforsythe.org

FRIENDS OF FORSYTHE NEWS

Although the quieter summer period is almost on us, the Board has been active. A Spring Beginner birding course was well received and additional inquiries led to a decision to repeat the course in the fall. Saturday morning bird walks, led by some of our expert volunteers, between the end of March and late May were also well received and will also be run in the fall. Dates will be announced later in the summer. Another new program, Friday Flicks at Forsythe, featuring such films as "March of the Penguins" and "Winged Migration", is having its run extended to the first and third Friday evenings during July. If warranted, two more dates in August will be added. This program is also expected to continue in the fall season.

Friends are also looking into possible ways to provide the repairs needed to re-open the Eco-Trail. We're currently awaiting word on cost estimates, with a local contractor offering to provide equipment and labor free. You will be hearing more about this.

Store operations have closed for the summer and will re-open Labor Day weekend. We expect to have some new items as well as our regular books and other gift items.

If you are not a member of Friends of Forsythe yet, now is a good time to join. Become a volunteer and help us build a bigger and better Refuge support group, sorely needed in these days of budget crunching.

Report by Friends President Dr. Ed Bristow



Our monthly club meetings feature varied topics. At recent meetings we have learned a bit about what judges look for when critiquing a photograph, how to use Photoshop to correct exposure problems in our photos as well as add creative effects, and marveled at some great travel photos.

In May a dedicated group of club members made a pilgrimage to Kimball's Beach to view and photograph the horseshoe crabs coming ashore to lay eggs. This is a dramatic and dependable spring event, and provides vital nourishment for migrating birds on their way north to colder climes. Without the sustenance of these plentiful and nutritious eggs, the Red Knot and other birds might not have the strength to make their way to their breeding grounds. To see some of the pictures we took, visit our photo album at <http://tinyurl.com/my76d>.

Two weeks after that, about 20 club members caravanned around South Jersey for our Pine Barrens Adventure, a 14-hour field trip excellently led by Joe Lomax and Sally Rowland. Rudy Arndt also contributed learning and lore on his specialty: fish and amphibians. After a convivial dinner at Allen's Clam Bar in New Gretna, the trip concluded with a tromp through the Lake Oswego area hunting the elusive pine barrens tree frog. Club members were able to capture many great photos of species unique and endemic to our Pine Barrens.

In October we will be participating in a juried competition with two other south Jersey photo clubs, and in November we will host our own competition with a Refuge theme.

For more details on our club activities, please take a gander at our club web site at www.stayfocusedphotoclub.com.

Mariann Davis
Secretary, Stay Focused Photo Club

LE CORNER



Here we are again and the summer is fast approaching us (Can you believe that June is just about over?). With the warm weather and school letting out, we are starting to see some more activity on refuge property, mostly in the form of off-road vehicles (ATV's and

ATV use at Oxycocus



motorcycles) and wildfires. The refuge in the past two months has seen approximately five wildfires ranging in size from a

Dumping at Holgate



quarter of an acre up to one acre. Fortunately all of the incidents have been responded to in a quick and efficient manner by the State Forest Fire Service and local fire departments. All of the wildfires were extinguished before they were allowed to gain much ground and threaten vast amounts of forest, structures or housing developments.



Brian Willard

And now on to a sad note: Brian Willard, my long time partner and friend has moved on to greener pastures (no, he has not passed away). Brian has received a promotion to a supervisory position as a law enforcement officer at Eastern Massachusetts Refuge Complex, one of only two in the entire region. I am both glad and saddened by this development. I have had, for the past six years, the honor and privilege of working with Brian. During this period of time, Brian has always been the finest example of a professional law enforcement officer, being courteous, knowledgeable and strict when dealing with the public. We have also had our share of adventure: whether it was checking waterfowl hunters in the dead of winter, lugging around signposts through the bug infested woods or almost having our boat sail away from us one day on the bay (and yes we were not on board). I will miss these times, but in the same instance I am happy for Brian and Stacey for their new opportunity and am excited for them as they take on new challenges (new home owners with new jobs- talk about stress) and have a chance to be closer to Brian's family and friends. Thank you, Brian for your dedication and hard work to your first refuge (NFEBF- stands for "Never Forget Edwin B. Forsythe;" you know how we love acronyms in the government).

by Refuge Officer Chris Pancila



From My Perspective

by Al Martens

Good fortune allowed me to frequently wander through the various section of Songbird Trail this spring. A few highlights follow.

In mid April I was walking through the second meadow near the Kestrel box when there came into view at about 100 yards several fair sized birds jumping up three or four feet into the air and sometimes landing on branches of small shrubs. They were showing off the white of their wings and fanning out very striking white tails. Another walker came by and she and I watched them continue this behavior. My old Petersons Guide book identified them as Eastern Meadowlarks. John Eastman's "Birds of Field and Shore" described this behavior as the territorial claims made by the male Meadowlarks. Apparently they are polygamous and need to claim territory large enough for several females to share. And, they need to do it in the couple of weeks they have on the nesting field before the harem arrived. Next year I'll be looking for them again as they put on their show.

This is the spring I broke down and bought "Butterflies through Binoculars " by Jeffrey Glassberg, and found how easy it is to identify butterflies with this book's guide. Before the warblers arrived and while walking the Refuge there are first spring Azure butterfly, followed by Cloudless Sulfur and Juniper Hairstreak, Morning Cloak and Falcate Orangetip. Next there is the spectacular Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, the showy Black Swallowtail and we can count ourselves lucky to see all the small but striking Pearl Crescents. All before those awaited spring songbirds get here.

When the leaves filled the trees so did the songbirds. Better birders than I are constantly around the Forsythe Refuge and it is always a pleasure to be able to interact with them. Y.Y.Wang, one of the regular waterbird survey participants, was in the parking lot one early May morning and mentioned he heard a Nashville Warbler in a tree near my car. This is a bird song I do not know. While his wife Jane and I struggled for minutes with our binoculars to locate the bird, Y.Y. calmly set up his scope. Then while Jane and I still struggled to locate the bird, he announced that

he had the bird in his scope and with high magnification! Jane said, "That's Y.Y. He always does that."

This was also the year that the Barn Swallows, that for several years have been nesting over one of Refuge office building doors on a little shelf, found that they had competition for the nest site. A pair of Phoebe's decided they were willing to battle for it. The battle progressed outside of Cindy's office window. The battle seemed to be about even. However, looking at the bird sitting on the nest it is clear that Mr. and Mrs. Phoebe won.

New this year is a series of walks each Saturday morning sponsored by the Friends of Forsythe. With the sanction of the Refuge management, we have been able to share with the public some areas of the Refuge that are normally closed to the public. It was a great pleasure to take people out on sections of the Songbird Trail that are my favorites. We also visited some very "birdy" spots that are otherwise closed: in the morning light, a little stream wandering under tall trees with lush spring grasses growing and warblers in the trees; Black crowned Night Herons and a Bobolink rising out of the marsh off of a protected shaded cove behind the experimental pond; Orchard Orioles crisscrossing the small meadow in front of the experimental pond viewing platform; this, and more. Hopefully some of those, with whom I was happy to share these things, will be back as volunteers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Stay Focused Photo Club meets the second Saturday of each month at 10 am in the Refuge auditorium.

Purple Martin Nest Checks

Join refuge staff each Thursday through August for Purple Martin nest checks and a short orientation for anyone interested in learning more about the Purple Martinwatch Program. During rain or severe wind, the nest checks are not conducted. The nest checks will start promptly at 9:00 a.m. Meet at the field in front of the headquarters building.

Friday Night Flicks at Forsythe

July 7 and 21

"Fly Away Home" will be shown on July 7th. Free movies at 7:30 PM at the refuge headquarters building on Great Creek Road in Oceanville. Refreshments will be available. Call 652-1665 for more information.

For the Piping Plover, 'Life is a Beach'

by Vinny Turner, Wildlife Biologist

Like a fine Swiss watch, the piping plovers made their return to the Holgate and Little Beach Units of the E.B. Forsythe NWR. With both beach units closed to all public access, the welcome mats were out and ready for their arrival. The first of the plovers arrived on the refuge in early April. Upon their arrival, plovers will begin to establish pair bonds that will keep them together throughout the breeding season. To entice the female, male plovers will

perform aerial courtship displays, which also include several vocalization calls. Once the bond has been established, the male will then establish the pairs' nesting territory by digging small depressions in the sand (known as scrapes). Several scrapes will be made within a given territory with the female eventually selecting one of the scrapes as the nest where the eggs will be laid. Plover pairs are territorial of their nest locations and will aggressively chase any intruding plover that strays into the nest area. Because of the unseasonably cool spring, the first nest was not found until May 15. As of press time, nine active nests from 12 total nests created were found at Holgate, while five active nests from eight total nests were found at Little Beach. The first hatching of plover eggs should occur around June 18 and will continue throughout the month of June.

Though their life is a beach, it is far from relaxing. Between severe weather events and predators, nest loss is an unfortunate expectation. Predators such as gulls, fox, and raccoons make life difficult for plovers incubating and rearing their young. Some preventive measures can be taken to protect plover nests. Using garden fencing as a predator exclosure around the nest helps keep larger predators away from the nest. However, because plover chicks leave the nest shortly after hatching, the exclosures become useless for protecting the chicks. Measures can be taken to reduce the predation threat to the chicks, but it is inevitable that some chicks will be lost before they have the ability to fly, which is usually 25 days after hatching.

Those chicks that are fortunate enough to survive will continue to stay with the parents through late July and August. By the end of August, plovers begin to stage up with other migrating plovers for the fall migration to



Richard Kraminski

Piping plover chick

How good are your eyes?



photo by Justine Beiler

Several scrapes will be made within a given territory with the female eventually selecting one of the scrapes as the nest where the eggs will be laid.

their wintering grounds. By the time the young and adult plovers reach their winter retreat in Florida and the Gulf Coast, the young plovers will separate themselves from their parents and begin to live independent lives.

While we may think living/vacationing on a beach is a slice of heaven, for the piping plover during the nesting season, it's a daily struggle for survival. With protected areas like Holgate and Little Beach and dedicated staff, interns and volunteers to monitor the plovers, we will continue to see many generations of piping plovers returning like clockwork to our refuge beaches.



ON THE WEB

Invasives Species eFieldTrip Open to anyone interested in invasive species can sign up for a virtual tour of a refuge and learn how it manages its invasive species. The eFieldTrip will be available from February 22 through June 30, 2006 at <http://www.efieldtrips.org/invasives>.

Bald Eagle Cam Now On-Line

A unique partnership between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's training facility in Shepherdstown, West Virginia and the technology center of the Wheeling Jesuit University is bringing real-time online views of the growth and development of three energetic American bald eagle chicks. Still photos from the bald eagle cam and a running Web log of their daily activities are available at <http://www.fws.gov/nctc/cam/>.

VOLUNTEER AWARDS LUNCHEON

Our annual volunteer awards ceremony was held on May 21st at Gourmet Italian Cuisine in Galloway. Congressional citations were presented to John Matteoni (1000 hours), Sue Tebbs (2200 hours), Al Reichenbach (2500 hours), John Williamson (4200 hours), Doug Kellner (4500 hours), Ed Jones (4500 hours), and Ed Bristow for 6000 hours of volunteer service to Forsythe Refuge. Stu Duenkel was also presented with a Congressional citation for saving the Refuge thousands of dollars by picking up and collecting washed out signs on the Holgate Unit. Other certificates and tokens of appreciation were presented to all the volunteers without whose help, the Refuge could not continue to operate, especially in such hard times. Kris Arcuri was named Volunteer of the Year (see article on page 1). For those of you who could not join us, we missed you and hope that you can join us for next year's awards celebration. Hope you enjoy these photos.



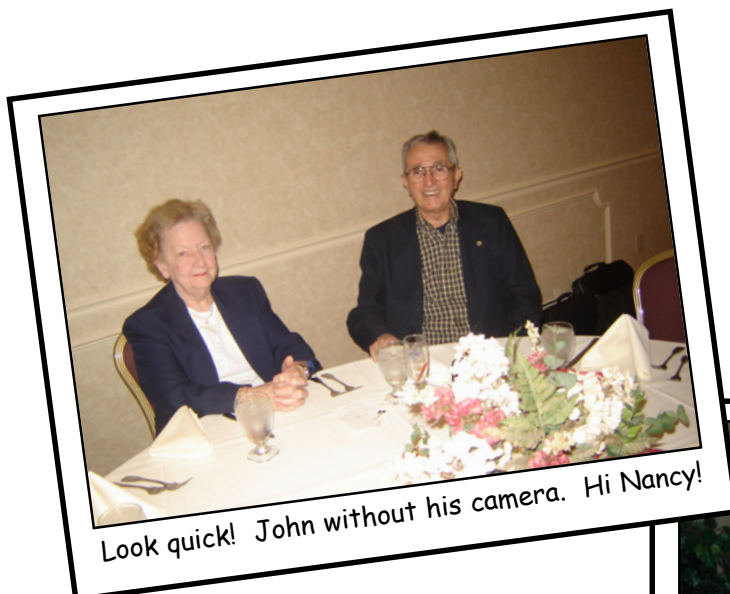
Our ever-faithful & beautiful ladies of the garden



Sandy and "Vanna" modeling a 50/50 prize



The family that volunteers together, stays together!



Look quick! John without his camera. Hi Nancy!



Is John trying to "pick-up" Gerrie?
No, it's really a surprise award.



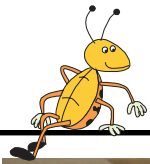
Our "first responders"



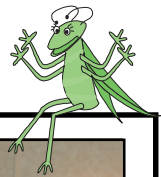
A rose between the thorns...
sorry guys, but you know it's true.



A family of Martens and one King bird



What a great looking bunch of volunteers!



Forsythe's Volunteers of the Years



Good friends and good food
Thank you all!

pictured above left to right:
Sue Tebbs (2002), Al Martens (2004), Kris Arcuri
(2005), Ed Bristow (1999), Al Reichenbach (2003),
Doug Kellner (2001) and Ed Jones (2000).



Our volunteers who served honorably and with distinction in the United States military



John Danzenbaker was drafted into the Army and participated in the Normandy Invasion D plus 4, Utah Beach and was wounded twice. He retired as Lt.Col. in 1964.

Rick Heffley served with the US Marine Corps from 1971 to 1974 - 2nd Marines, 2nd Marine Division.

Art Kelly served in the United States Marine Corps from 1956 until 1962, with the Marine Air Wing (MAW) serving on an aircraft carrier.

Doug Kellner. US Air Force, 1958-63. Doug was a gunner and an airborne radio/radar technician. He was assigned to the 75th Bomber Squadron, Strategic Air Command (SAC).

Rich Koterba served in the US Army and was a tank driver in Germany from 1957 to 59.

Bill Long, US Navy, 1972 to 1978, Destroyer Duty. Civilian for US Army Baghdad Iraq. Combat Zone. Construction Management 2005.

John Matteoni enlisted in the US Navy in 1943 and served until 1946. He was a radio operator with a rank of Radioman 3rd Class. When the war with Japan ended (Happy Days), John was sent to Truk Atoll via Hawaii and Guam where we repatriated the Japanese troops back to Japan.

Arnie Mohel was with the 104th Infantry Division (Timberwolves) WW2 in Europe as a combat infantryman.

Joe Perchetti, Specialist (E-4), United States Army from 1987 to 1991. Permanent party assignments were Fort Story, Virginia and the Republic of Korea, 2nd Infantry Division (DCI), at Camp Casey ("Freedom's Frontier").

Ed Reed, U.S. Navy 1973-1975. Honorably Discharged. Petty Officer 3rd Class, Submarine Sonar Tech (STS-3), Antisubmarine Warfare (Air and Sea), San Diego, California. U.S. Naval Submarine Fleet Pacific (SUBPAC), Point Loma, California & Groton, Connecticut (SUBLANT). Top Secret clearance with quals in subsurface, aviation and communications.

Mike Santino served 4 years active duty in the Air Force from 64-68 and 33 years Air Force Reserves and retired from Air Force Reserve in 1998.

Jim Steet served in the US Navy, submarine service from 1961 to 67.

John Williamson was in US Army Air Forces during W.W.II. as Radar Tech team chief in long range Radar Air Warning Service in Third and Fourth Army Air Forces 1943-1946.

... and to the others of you who did not respond, we thank you for the freedoms we have today.

Our new Deputy Project Leader



Photo by Charlotte McDowell

Brian Braudis

recently arrived as the new Deputy Project Leader at Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife

Refuge (NWR) in Oceanville, NJ. He will be moving to the area with his wife, Mary Pat and two children, Anna and John.

Brian graduated from Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania, his home state, with bachelor degrees in biology and environmental studies. He is also a Certified Wildlife Biologist with The Wildlife Society. Prior to working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on national wildlife refuges, Brian worked for the Audubon Society in Western Pennsylvania, a job he was pleased to get after volunteering for several months.

Brian has worked at several national wildlife refuges and has enjoyed a wide range of wildlife experiences. In South Dakota, the Central Flyway at Lacreek NWR, he assisted with waterfowl research and banding which included x-raying, and banding trumpeter swans. At Lake Woodruff NWR in Florida, Brian assisted with manatee and alligator research which involves handling these magnificent critters. In Arkansas Brian worked at Big Lake NWR in the extreme northeast portion of the state. This refuge provides important habitat for migrating waterfowl in the Mississippi Flyway and therefore is designated as a sanctuary, the lake and surrounding areas close during the fall migration. Most recently at Prime Hook NWR in Delaware, Brian worked with Delaware Bay issues such as the horseshoe crab, shorebirds and Atlantic Flyway waterfowl.

Field biology and nature study are Brian's vocation as well as his avocation. He also enjoys involving Friends and volunteers in refuge work. In addition to field biology work, Brian enjoys all aspects of refuge management and recently he was selected to attend "Stepping Up To Leadership." This is training offered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for mid-level managers to improve their leadership skills through skill assessments, coaching, self-paced and group exercises and developmental assignments.

As Brian will tell you, "This is great training designed to train you as a 21st Century leader."

In these times of change and uncertainty staff needs to have solid, grounded leaders they can depend on. I have been inspired by this training to take graduate courses on leadership at Wilmington College.

Anxiety is running high at field stations right now but I can tell you these jobs—working for wildlife in public service, are the best jobs anyone can get. You have the ability to significantly contribute, experience all sorts of wildlife and work with some of the best, most dedicated people in the world, to quote Theodore Roosevelt, "Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."

OUR INTERNS ...

The staff has once again been given the opportunity to work with some excellent young people who are starting on their careers in environmental conservation. With budget cuts a reality, our interns play an indispensable role in helping Forsythe Refuge meet critical conservation objectives by providing essential services that we do not have the resources or staff to provide.

Meet **Kim Forgione** from Egg Harbor Township. Kim volunteered at the Refuge this past year and did such a good job that we were glad to see her apply for an internship. Kim is a graduate of Stockton College with a double major in Biology and Environmental Studies.



Matt Strassburg is from Princeton, Minnesota and is a senior at St. Cloud State University. His studies are in the field of biology with a wildlife emphasis. Matt is excited to be working with endangered species. In his spare time, Matt enjoys reading, camping and canoeing.

Matt and Kim spend most of their time at Holgate and Little Beach monitoring endangered species.

Justine Beiler is our outreach intern this year. She is a recent graduate of Messiah College with a degree in Biology/Environmental Education. She enjoys the tight-knit atmosphere of the staff and volunteers and loves the area - "It's very beautiful and unique with plenty of birds to keep me occupied!" Justine lives in Kirkwood, PA.



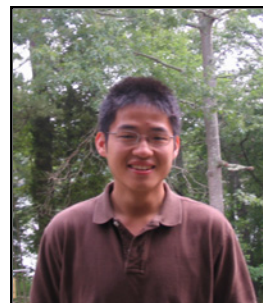
Steve Grodsky lives in Newton, NJ and is a sophomore at Cook College Rutgers University majoring in Natural Resource Management. Steve's thoughts about interning at Forsythe -- "It provides me with a good opportunity to get out in the refuge when I otherwise could not spend time there. Working in the refuge allows me to be immersed in the conservation issues related to the beach nesting birds that use the refuge."

Tom Virzi is a PhD candidate in the Department of Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources at Rutgers University, working in the lab of Julie L. Lockwood, PhD. Tom, with the help of Steve, is in the final stages of his dissertation project, which is a detailed study of the breeding ecology of the American Oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*) breeding on coastal barrier beaches and in salt marshes in New Jersey. The focus of his research is to develop an understanding of the effects of human disturbance and coastal development on the reproductive success of American Oystercatchers in urbanized coastal ecosystems. Tom is working in cooperation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service at the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge and the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, Endangered and Nongame Species Program. He expects the results of his study to provide information that will assist management in maximizing conservation efforts for the species.



While not interns this year, we want to acknowledge two other college students who are volunteering their time at the refuge this summer.

Melanie Schroer is entering her second year at the University of New Hampshire as a student of Environmental Conservation. Because she is eager to study wildlife and inform the public of many natural and current environmental issues, she chose to volunteer this summer at Forsythe.



Jia (Jay) Ling is currently a Junior at Colorado State with a double major in Wildlife Biology and Conservation Biology. Jay decided to volunteer at the Forsythe to gain perspective into the life of a wildlife biologist. He believes that experience is essential and more important than what any classroom can teach him.

Shake it Off and Step Up

A farmer owned an old mule that fell into a well. After assessing the situation, the farmer reluctantly concluded that neither the mule nor the well was worth saving. Instead, he called his neighbors together and enlisted them to help bury the old mule.

Initially the old mule was frantic, but as the dirt kept hitting his back, something happened. It dawned on the mule that every time a shovel load landed on his back, he should SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP!

This he did, blow after blow. Shake it off and step up. No matter how painful the blows or how distressing the situation, the old mule fought panic and just kept right on SHAKING IT OFF AND STEPPING UP!!

Before long, the old mule, battered and exhausted, stepped triumphantly through the mouth of that well. What seemed like it would bury him, actually helped him ... all because of how he handled his adversity.

Such is life. If we face our problems and respond to them positively, refusing to surrender to panic, bitterness, or self pity, the adversities that came along to bury us usually possess the potential to benefit us.



WHO'S ON STAFF?

Project Leader

STEVE ATZERT

Deputy Project Leader

BRIAN BRAUDIS

Acting Refuge Manager

Barnegat Division

VINNY TURNER

Chief of Visitor Services

ART WEBSTER

Biologist

VINNY TURNER

Refuge Law Enforcement Officer

CHRIS PANCILA

Administrative

Officer

MARTHA HAND

Visitor Services

Manager

CINDY HEFFLEY

Volunteer Coordinator

SANDY PERCHETTI

Maintenance Professional

TOM HOLDSWORTH



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